

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 2, 11, and 12 without prejudice to or disclaimer of subject matter.

Please amend claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 10, 13, and 14 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A vertically integrated method for facilitating the processing of transactions for entities, comprising:

receiving a request at a host system for a transaction from an entity via a network;

determining software programs at the host system, among a plurality of software programs providing processing for different services, for processing the transaction;

accessing the software programs to process the transaction;

receiving results of the processing; and

providing the results from the host system to the entity via the network.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the accessing step includes accessing a solution stack having a plurality of software programs providing services to process the transaction.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the accessing step includes using an integration block to access the software programs and maintain the software programs decoupled.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the accessing step includes using the software programs providing the following services:

credit card processing, calculation of taxes, warehouse management, shipping, and invoicing.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further including providing to the entities a single access point for processing of transactions using the software programs.

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing a vertically integrated solution for processing transactions for entities, comprising:

a module configured to receive a request at a host system for a transaction from an entity via a network;

a module configured to determine software programs at the host system, among a plurality of software programs providing processing for different services, for processing the transaction;

a module configured to access the software programs to process the transaction and to receive results of the processing; and

a module configured to provide the results from the host system to the entity via the network.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a single source for facilitating the processing of transactions for business entities using a plurality of software programs, comprising:

providing to the entities a single communication point;

receiving at a host system via the single communication point requests for transactions from the entities via a network;

calling a plurality of software programs in a solution stack at the host system to process the transactions;

receiving results of the processing; and

returning from the host system to the entities via the single communication point the results of the processing via the network.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, further comprising decoupling the plurality of software programs using an integration block.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the calling step includes using the plurality of software programs providing the following services:

credit card processing, calculation of taxes, warehouse management, shipping, and invoicing.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8₁ wherein the calling step includes using software plug-ins to access the plurality of software programs.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8₁ wherein the calling step includes using one of the plurality of software programs that calls the others of the plurality of software programs for processing the transactions.